

***Harmonia axyridis* (Pallas) (Coleoptera: Coccinellidae) a further etymological note.**—My colleague Peter Edwards pointed out to me a number of harlequin ladybirds entering slightly open windows in a stair-well of the herbarium at the Royal Botanic Gardens Kew on 6 November 2006 and also mentioned that the species had been at Kew for over a year. Needing the correct scientific name for adding it to the 36th Supplement of the 'Wild Fauna and Flora of Kew', now in the course of preparation, I was puzzled by the specific epithet. Finding from *Index Animalium* that it had been described by Peter Simon Pallas (1741–1811) (the famous German naturalist and traveller who spent most of his life in Russia) in his '*Reise durch verschiedene Provinzen des russischen Reichs*' 1771–1776, a copy of which is in the library at Kew, I looked up the original description. This states that he found it on the plant *Axyris amaranthoides* L. (Chenopodiaceae) so the epithet is easily explained. The plant genus was so-named by Linnaeus because its leaves have a scurfy stellate indumentum, the Greek adjective axyros meaning unshaven.

John Muggleton (*British Journal of Entomology and Natural History* 19: 5 (2006)) has commented on the common name harlequin so it seemed useful to add a note on its scientific specific epithet. I am grateful to Desmond Meikle for the meaning of the adjective which I could not find in the several Greek dictionaries at my disposal. — BERNARD VERDCOURT, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 3AB.

**The Harlequin ladybird *Harmonia axyridis* (Pallas) (Coleoptera: Coccinellidae) as prey of *Pholcus phalangioides* (Fuesslin) (Arachnida: Araneae).**— This common spider lives unobtrusively in corners between ceiling and wall. Potential prey, on touching the silk scaffolding, are quickly wrapped in silk. On completion of the meal, the silken shroud is cut free.

Harlequin ladybirds started entering the house during October 2006 and on 7 November a discarded trussed specimen was discovered. No evidence of feeding was found and the reflex blood had seeped through the silk. On 8 November, a female *Pholcus* was observed apparently feeding, on a wrapped ladybird for at least 12 hours, the beetle being discarded by the following morning. Extensive reflex bleeding had occurred. Any toxins in the ladybird had no acute effect, the spider was not only performing its agitated dance on disturbance but was found feeding on a second ladybird the following day. Feeding continued for at least four hours before the prey was discarded. Subsequently a second female was observed feeding on a *Harmonia* ladybird and up to 7 January 2007 a further four discarded meals were found.

How does such a bulky insect become and remain trapped long enough to become a meal? Is *Pholcus* immune to any toxins contained in the beetle and are other ladybird species acceptable as prey? — D. W. JENNER, Kennaways, Ospringe, Faversham, Kent ME13 0HA.

**A guide to the adult caddisflies or sedge flies (Trichoptera)** by Peter Barnard & Emma Ross (2007). 48 colour photographs. This recent AIDGAP test key to the families of British caddis is available free on request from the Field Studies Council.